6.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The implementation plan identifies the major transit investments, new roadways, intersection upgrades, and pedestrian improvements by study zone, as listed in Table 6-1 and illustrated in Figures 6-1 thru 6-5. This plan will accommodate the anticipated growth in both population and travel demand by increasing the capacity and connectivity of the corridor. It will concurrently upgrade the human environment through the creation of parks, wider sidewalks, safer intersections, and pedestrian focuses at major nodes.

For the plan to succeed, several agencies must coordinate their efforts, such as GRTA, ARC, and GDOT, as well as the City. Costs for completing the plan are low, versus the benefits accrued, as many of the recommended projects are short term upgrades to existing infrastructure such as adding a crosswalk, repairing pedestrian signals, and re-timing intersections.

6.1 Approach

The development of the implementation plan was based on analysis of growth trends in the corridor and on an understanding of how projects should function, as well as a concern for efficiency in terms of cost and impact.

The first analysis involved assessing the growth trends in the corridor to establish when each zone was likely to need its transportation improvements. This was based on two factors: 1. When will the projected growth generate travel demands that might overburden the existing Northside Drive transportation system and 2. When would growth along the frontage of Northside Drive potentially make projects more difficult or costly to implement. For example, because the northern half of the corridor is currently undergoing a wave of residential, retail and office development, additional travel lanes, streetscape and median improvement projects were are programmed for implementation within the next ten years. In the southern portion of the corridor development activity is occurring at a slower pace, so the roadway capacity projects are programmed to occur beyond the ten year timeframe.

The second portion of the analysis considered the functionality of each project to make sure that projects had logical termini. For example, the recommended BRT project should to implemented in the entire corridor at one time, because the transit benefits and function cannot be provided for a limited segment of the corridor.

Dependencies between projects were also a point of consideration in the development of the implementation plan. Railroad infrastructure, particularly bridges, is a significant constraint to improvements along Northside Drive. The implementation plan addresses this issue by programming any improvements to railroad bridges prior to or in the same time period with improvements that would involve widening Northside Drive in the same area.

Finally, projects were scheduled to maximize the efficiency of implementation and minimize the impacts and disruption to neighborhoods and transportation function. The most significant

example of this approach is that the streetscaping, median and additional travel lanes along Northside Drive are programmed together, rather than as separate projects.

6.2 Construction Cost Estimating Methodology

A careful approach to cost estimates was used for the implementation plan. For the BRT projects the construction cost estimates were based on data developed as part of the MARTA Memorial Drive Arterial BRT Implementation Plan. That planning effort gathered cost information from similar projects that had been constructed or were under development in several cities in California. For local bus service the most current MARTA unit costs were used. For the transit transfer station at 17th Street, the GRTA Transit Cost Estimating Methodology was used.

For roadway type improvements including intersection improvements, pedestrian improvements, streetscapes, sidewalks, medians and adding travel lanes, construction cost estimates were generated by estimating the quantities of materials and/or equipment required for each improvement. Aerial photography and field surveys were used to identify the existing facilities in the corridor. Then, conceptual descriptions of improvements and/or the proposed typical section were applied to the existing facilities to determine the quantities needed for construction. These were then multiplied by a typical unit cost for the Atlanta urban area to determine the construction cost. The detailed cost estimate sheets for roadway projects are included as Appendix C of this document.

For railroad projects, a typical unit cost of $3,000,000 per bridge widening was used, except where more detailed estimates were available.

Costs for other project types, such as signage improvements or pedestrian barriers were based on similar experiences with other projects and planning/engineering judgment.

The construction cost estimates do not include the cost of right-of-way or utilities, which will be significant along Northside Drive. These were not included, because conceptual engineering is needed on the projects proposed in the implementation plan in order to determine these types of costs.

6.3 Schedule

Projects were scheduled into three generalized timeframes within the 25-year planning horizon for the plan. These timeframes are as follows:

- Short-Term, 2005-2008;
- Medium-Term, 2008-2015; and
- Long-Term, 2015-2030

The projects listed in the short-term timeframe are more detailed and numerous than in the medium and long-term periods; however, on a cost basis, far more dollars are programmed in the medium and long-term periods. The short term project construction costs are estimated to be

$2,200,000, while the medium and long-term project construction costs are estimated at $58,000,000. These costs do not include right-of-way or utilities.

6.4 Responsible Party

The implementation plan also addresses which party should lead the development and implementation of projects. In general, roadway/streetscape and intersection projects are assigned to GDOT, since Northside Drive is both a state route and US highway. Transit projects are MARTA's responsibility, because Northside Drive is entirely within the MARTA service area.

6.5 Short-Term Improvements

As noted in Chapter 3, one of the major elements of the study is to develop a pakage of short-term, lower cost improvements for the corridor that would provide immediate benefits. The short-term improvements are integrated into the implementation plan given in Table 6-1. The package of short-term improvements is estimated to cost approximately $2,200,000, not including any right-of-way or utilities costs.

Potential funding opportunities exist for these projects through Governor Purdue's Fast Forward Transportation Program. The Fast Forward Transportation Program emphasizes congestion reduction while improving mobility and promoting economic development. Projects recently implemented through the Fast Forward program are similar in scope and scale to the types of improvement projects envisioned in the short-term improvements identified in this plan. These include traffic signal timing and synchronization, intersection operational improvements, intelligent transportation systems, pedestrian/sidewalk projects, and safety-related enhancements.

6.6 Project Development

It should be noted that for the medium and long-term projects listed in the implementation plan there is significant additional work needed to develop them. The planning-level cost estimates are appropriate for corridor-wide planning, but should not be considered complete at this time. Additionally, there are six steps that will be required to implement most of these projects as described below:

1. Refine the concept for the project including project limits, typical section and cost including right-of-way and utilities;
2. Coordinate with regional agencies as necessary to ensure funding and compliance with regulations;
3. Conduct required environmental impact analyses;
4. Design the project including right-of-way plans, drainage and roadway; and
5. Construct the facility.

The securing of local funding for these projects will be an important step in project development. The City of Atlanta already has funding sources available that can be used towards

implementation. These include the Quality of Life bond funds and Livable Center Initiative (LCI) funds in the areas of the corridor that have been studied under the Upper West Side LCI.

6.7 Upper Westside Livable Center Initiative Projects

The Upper Westside Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) was completed in February 2005 and recommended several projects along and intersecting Northside Drive. Although these projects are not included in the implementation plan, they are recommended for implementation. For more details on these projects, please see the Upper Westside LCI Final Report.

Table 6-1: Implementation Plan

Figure 6-1: Implementation Plan (Deering Road Zone)

Figure 6-2: Implementation Plan (10th Street Zone)

Figure 6-3: Implementation Plan (North Avenue Street Zone)

Figure 6-4: Implementation Plan (Vine City MARTA Zone)

Figure 6-5: Implementation Plan (McDaniel Street Zone)